

# Are You Teaching for Democracy? Developing Dispositions, Promoting Democratic Practice, and Embracing Social Justice and Diversity

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**ABSTRACT:** The popular phrase *teaching for democracy* has appeared in the literature about American education and is often accepted as a given in a nation founded on democratic ideals. In this article, we argue that a deeper consideration of the meaning of democracy, particularly in relation to issues of diversity and social justice in education, is of paramount importance to teacher educators and the candidates and teachers with whom they engage in critical reflection on these topics. Through examples from courses in varied programs with teacher candidates and educators in diverse settings, we suggest a focus on core dispositions and specific rubric components to engage students in an ongoing shared self-assessment process appropriate for preservice and in-service teachers who are committed to exploring and implementing teaching for democracy.

Culturally responsible pedagogists need to transfer the knowledge base about teaching for democracy and equity into actions, inclusive of language, behaviors, and practices, to accomplish democracy, what we equate with social justice. How do educators plan and assess curriculum to support student learning, equity, social justice, and a global perspective in the teaching-learning process? Sonia Nieto (2001) stresses decision making and social action skills as cornerstones to creating and supporting positive change. Are teachers engaged in critically reflective decision making, and what actions result? And given that social in-

justices occur not only in personal encounters with others but, often less obviously, through systemic institutional racism, how do we engage preservice teacher candidates and in-service educators in critical reflections and resulting action to address social injustices? One way to assess whether social-justice behaviors are actually occurring is through the use of reflective self-reporting guided by detailed rubrics based on social-justice dispositions.

Dispositions are often thought of as goals that describe a person's desired behaviors and attitudes. Typically, dispositions in the educational setting are large ideas that, when exam-

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ined, encompass many areas and skills, address individual development as a whole, and relate to how students function in class and society. The dispositions of most concern to us as teacher educators regard diversity and social justice.

In this article, we share the findings from our ongoing disposition development and assessment in education programs at four institutions during three academic years to determine how engaging teacher candidates and teachers as learners in disposition awareness and self-reflection influences dispositions regarding equity and social justice. Our goal has been to empower knowledgeable, collaborative, ethical, reflective practitioners as transformative leaders guided by a commitment to social justice, diversity, and the promotion of democratic learning communities. Definitions of dispositions from the professional knowledge bases, specific course interpretations, and rubric applications are shared, along with examples of students' self-assessment statements. The incorporation of disposition analysis in teacher education empowers students to engage in Freire's (1970/1986) *conscientização* and advocacy through engagement in critical self-awareness of the role of the individual in a democratic community of learners, locally, nationally, even globally:

To every understanding, sooner or later an action corresponds. Once man [or woman] perceives a challenge, understands it, and recognizes the possibilities of response, he [or she] acts. The nature of that action corresponds to the nature of his [or her] understanding. Critical understanding leads to critical action. (Freire, 1973/1989, p. 44)

## Dispositions and Actions

Research on the relationship between educators' beliefs and practices indicates that the former assist educators in determining what is and what is not important in their practice (Charlesworth, Hart, Burts, & Hernandez, 1990; Collinson, 1996). Beliefs "act as a filter through which a host of instructional judg-

ments and decisions are made" (Fang, 1996, p. 51). This supports Combs's (1972) contention that people's beliefs follow and flow from their perceptions of a situation. Thus, beliefs help identify how one is disposed to behave, one's disposition.

Recognition of the power of beliefs is also discussed by Nisbett and Ross (1980), Shavelson (1983), and Shavelson and Stern (1981). In conjunction with Davidman and Davidman (2001) and Nieto (2001) and their proposals that learning occurs when based on the real-life experiences of the students, we make the case for reflection on beliefs and on content knowledge in application to real-life experiences of the individual in development of actions for social justice. Social justice is a major factor in the development of culturally responsible pedagogy.

The continual approximation of *culturally responsible pedagogy* requires deeper levels of reflection and more culturally sensitive awareness and language usage. Pre-service and in-service pedagogists need to transfer the knowledge base about social justice and global interdependence into actions, inclusive of language, behaviors, and practices. (Huber & Warring, 2004, n.p.)

The language, behaviors, and practices of educators are a key component in the learning of their students; subsequently, colleges must prepare educators to better understand critical reflection.

The responsibility of colleges of education committed to democratic practice and social justice is to prepare teachers who are critically reflective and conscious of social interactions and their contribution to the liberation or oppression of others. Teaching with a commitment to social justice is a difficult journey that begins with engaging the learner in a deliberate reflective self-awareness. To engage in self-awareness, one must examine one's own culture. Then, the examination must lead to steps for social justice. Thus, critical reflection and experiential learning activities are a mainstay of curriculum and instruction that promote an understanding of the issues of democratic

practice in relation to concepts of social justice. This article focuses on identification of dispositions; ongoing use of a dispositions rubric for self-assessment; and the engagement of learners in reflective self-evaluation of dispositions related to issues of social justice, diversity, and global interdependence.

Although it is not an intended aspect of this article to focus on the knowledge bases for diversity, we want to acknowledge that we worked from G. Pritchey Smith's *Common Sense About Uncommon Knowledge: The Knowledge Bases for Diversity* (1998; see also, Smith, 2000–2001) as a framework for course parameters specific to diversity. The first author has, in fact, used Smith's knowledge bases as the foundation for her courses on human relations and multicultural education since Smith's presentation of the paper "Toward Defining a Culturally Responsible Pedagogy for Education: The Knowledge Base for Educating Teachers of Minority and Culturally Diverse Students" (1991) at the annual meeting of the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education. We make this point for two reasons: first, as a delimitation of the focus of this article and, second, as a clarification regarding the myth that "no special knowledge and skills other than the mainstream, traditional knowledge bases of teacher education are needed to train teachers for classrooms of students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds" (Smith, 1988, p. 17). (For more detail about this aspect of teaching for social justice, see Huber-Warring, Mitchell, Alagic, & Gibson, 2005; Huber-Warring & Warring, 2005; Smith, 2005.) Teachers must possess necessary knowledge, skills, and dispositions to be effective. To further identify the dispositions, we find it necessary to offer a brief examination of national organizations that affect the field of teacher education.

### Defining Dispositions in the National Standards

Three of the agencies that have an impact on teachers and students through their mission and operations are the National Board for Pro-

fessional Teaching Standards, the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, and the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium. According to the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (n.d.-b), both the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education and the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium worked to align their standards with the National Board Teaching Standards. The standards developed by these three organizations create a common professional vision for what teachers should know and be able to do at the various stages of their professional development.

### National Board for Professional Teaching Standards

According to the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards website (n.d.-a), the board is an independent, nonprofit, nonpartisan organization governed by a board of directors, the majority of whom are classroom teachers. Other members include school administrators, school board leaders, governors and state legislators, higher education officials, teacher union leaders, and business and community leaders.

The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards document *What Teachers Should Know and Be Able to Do: The Five Core Propositions* (n.d.-c) lists what the board uses to identify teachers who enhance student learning and possess high levels of knowledge, skills, abilities, and commitments. These levels are reflected in the following five core propositions:

1. Teachers are committed to students and their learning.
2. Teachers know the subjects they teach and how to teach those subjects to students.
3. Teachers are responsible for managing and monitoring student learning.
4. Teachers think systematically about their practice and learn from experience.

5. Teachers are members of learning communities.

Each of the five core propositions includes knowledge, skills, abilities, and commitments to enhance student learning.

### The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education

The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education was founded in 1954 as an independent accrediting body that replaced the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education as the agency responsible for accreditation in teacher education. According to the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (n.d.), five groups were instrumental in its creation: American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, the National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification, the National Education Association, the Council of Chief State School Officers, and the National School Boards Association.

The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (2002) has defined *dispositions* as

the values, commitments and professional ethics that influence behaviors toward students, families, colleagues and communities and affect student learning, motivation and development as well as the educator's own professional growth. Dispositions are guided by beliefs and attitudes related to values such as *caring, fairness, honesty, responsibility and social justice* [emphasis added]. (p. 53)

The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education has set a benchmark for dispositions and has targets for each of the elements within each standard. The standards are used by institutions and as guidelines for Board of Examiner teams who visit each institution and examine whether or not candidates have developed the knowledge, skills, and dispositions delineated in state and professional

standards and the unit's conceptual framework.

### Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium

The Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium is a consortium of state education agencies, higher education institutions, and national educational organizations "dedicated to the reform of the preparation, licensing, and on-going professional development of teachers" (Council of Chief State School Officers, n.d., n.p.). In 1992, the consortium published *Model Standards for Beginning Teacher Licensing, Assessment, and Development: A Resource for State Dialogue*. It identifies principles that should be present in all teaching, regardless of the subject or grade level taught, and should serve as a framework for the systemic reform of teacher preparation and professional development. Each of the 10 principles addresses the knowledge, dispositions, and performances essential for all teachers. The following list includes the principles and elements of the corresponding dispositions that we have identified as being most closely related to the areas of social justice and equity:

1. Principle 1: Appreciates multiple perspectives.
2. Principle 3: Appreciates and values diversity, shows respect.
3. Principle 4: Values the development of critical thinking.
4. Principle 5: Understands how participation supports commitment, committed to the expression and use of democratic values in the classroom.
5. Principle 6: Values the many ways in which people seek to communicate, recognizes the power of language, appreciates the cultural dimension of communication.
6. Principle 9: Values critical thinking, reflection, and professional practice, committed to reflection.

## Defining Dispositions for Social Justice to Achieve Societal Change

Pedagogically, our work on dispositions is grounded in Paulo Freire's (1998) conceptualization of liberatory pedagogy. Thus, it is critical to recognize that the dispositions under discussion are those of the teacher educator as well as the preservice teacher candidate or inservice educator. Freire has reminded us,

To know that I must respect the autonomy, the dignity and the identity of the student and, in practice, must try to develop coherent attitudes and virtues in regard to such practice is an essential requirement of my profession, unless I am to become an empty mouther of words. (p. 61)

Keeping in mind the words of Paulo Freire, the national standards, and the literature, we developed disposition assessments for use in our courses. What are the dispositions that evolve from the national standards and the literature as those that are essential to the education profession?

In this section, we explore what is essential, recognizing that others may choose different labels for these working definitions. We focus on the following dispositions as being essential to developing actions for social change and social justice. Our goal has been to provide a working definition, or at the least an awareness of characteristic qualities, to inform reflection and reflective behavior (see Nolan & Huber, 1989) regarding democracy, ethical commitment, respect, critical inquiry, and social justice, which are key disposition elements identified from the literature, national organizations, and the organizational mission.

Acknowledging the wisdom of Antoine de Saint Exupéry (1943/1971), we recall the fox's admonition to the little prince as being applicable when working with dispositions: "What is essential is invisible to the eye" (p. 73). Beliefs are often invisible; however, they tend to guide behavior that is observable. The follow-

ing rubric elements guide analysis of dispositions: respect, critical inquiry, democratic participation, social justice, and ethical commitment (see appendix).

### Respect

Nowhere has the relationship of respect between teacher and learner been more keenly conceptualized than in the words of Freire (1998):

The climate of respect that is born of just, serious, humble, and generous relationships, in which both the authority of the teacher and the freedom of the students are ethically grounded, is what converts pedagogical space into authentic educational experience. (p. 86)

And regarding the necessity of respect, Freire writes,

There is a total incompatibility between, on the one hand, the human world of speech, perception, intelligibility, communicability, action, observation, comparison, verification, search, choice, decision, rupture, ethics, and the possibility of transgression and, on the other, neutrality, whatever the issue.

What ought to guide me is not the question of neutrality in education but respect, at all costs, for those involved in education. (p. 101)

Students are asked to maintain respect in all interactions, with specific focus on seeking to understand multiple perspectives.

### Critical Inquiry

As with Freire, for John Dewey (1899/1966), critical inquiry could be developed only when actively used in current, concrete, meaningful situations. The focus of students' study should be engagement in socially significant activities for the development of society, rather than outworn habits of behavior. In all course projects, interpretations are to be meaningful syntheses of course and program content.

## Democratic Participation

Joel Spring (2005) has reminded us of the harsh reality that "for some Americans, racism and democracy are not conflicting beliefs but are part of a general system of American values" (p. 6). In fact, as Rogers Smith (quoted in Spring, 2005) concludes,

for over 80 percent of U.S. history, American laws declared most people in the world legally ineligible to become U.S. citizens solely because of their race, original nationality, or gender. For at least two-thirds of American history, the majority of the domestic adult population was also ineligible for full citizenship for the same reasons. (p. 6)

Spring contends that "the European Americans who were abolitionists and civil rights advocates are the real exemplars of democracy and equality in American history" (p. 6).

Democracy, as Peter McLaren (1998) defines it, is a radical, critical multiculturalist "means continually suspending the habitual . . . undoing associations that bring closure to—that 'quilt'—the subject/citizen within the discourse of racial/cultural apartheid and other forms of domination" (p. 252). As his predecessor Paulo Freire ensures, McLaren reiterates that there is no neutral center "when your students live out their lives in the margins, in the barrios of hope" (p. 258).

## Social Justice

As Bell (1997) contends, social justice is a process and a goal, "the full and equal participation of all groups in a society that is mutually shaped to meet their needs" (p. 3). Social justice is a significant foundation from which teachers and teacher candidates work. Cochran-Smith (2004) identifies six principles of teaching for social justice:

1. Enable significant work within communities of learners.
2. Build on what students bring to school with them—knowledge and interests, cultural and linguistic resources.

3. Teach skills, bridge gaps.
4. Work with (not against) individuals, families, and communities.
5. Diversify forms of assessment.
6. Make inequity, power, and activism explicit parts of the curriculum.

## Ethical Commitment

Regarding what he identifies as commitment, Freire (1998) recognizes that a teacher is "intrinsically a political presence" and thereby transmits to her or his students

the capacity to analyze, to compare, to evaluate, to decide, to opt, to break with, . . . to be just, to practice justice, and to have a political presence . . . to have options . . . [to] honor truth. And all that means being ethical. . . . A choice for open-minded, democratic practice, then obviously [this] excludes reactionary, authoritarian, elitist attitudes and actions. (p. 90)

When these principles are identified, incorporated into courses, and assessed, candidates' disposition self-analysis can assist teachers in fully planning and promoting liberatory democratic learning communities in their own learning and ultimately in their own classrooms. Warring, Keim, and Rau (1998) describe the impact that training can have on students in courses dealing with diversity. Examples of course assignments to assist students to achieve societal change and self-assessed disposition statements collected from students are explained in the next section.

## How Courses Influence Dispositions Regarding Equity and Social Justice

The original disposition rubric has evolved through multiple permutations to address specific program goals and mission statements. The original rubric was developed at the Wichita State University for disposition evaluation by first-semester teacher candidates under

the leadership of professor Linda Bakken. The rubric's flexibility is evident, for we have employed it in courses such as Introduction to Research, the Psychology of Teaching and Learning, Social Foundations of Catholic Education, and Human Relations and Race. The rubric was also used in a general seminar, "Global Programs," with teachers from international schools in South America.

### One Approach to Teaching Dispositions for Social Justice (Huber-Warring)

Dispositions is introduced with the words of Elie Wiesel, Holocaust survivor and chronicler:

*But where was I to start?  
The world is so vast, I shall start with the country I  
know best, my own.  
But my country is so very large, I had better start  
with my town.  
But my town, too, is large.  
I had best start with my street.  
No: my home.  
No: my family.  
Never mind,  
I shall start with myself. (from *Souls on Fire*, 1982;  
quoted in Huber, 2002, p. 17)*

"Starting with myself" is foundational to the disposition self-analysis process. Students are to consider five categories of action—respect, critical inquiry, democratic participation, social justice, and ethical commitment—and they are to provide supporting evidence from their actions, refer to course content, and justify their self-evaluation. The criteria are provided on the disposition rubric (see appendix), as well as the range of possible points for unsatisfactory through exemplary accomplishment.

Typically, each student is required to maintain a disposition log and make at least one entry for each class meeting. A minimum of 2 entries for each of the 5 disposition aspects is required, a minimum total of 10 per class. Students also self-grade, with 5 points possible for each of the 5 aspects; or 25 points. The instructor also provides a score of up to 25 possible points. This is the only assignment for

which no mechanical corrections (spelling, grammar, and structure) are made. The exception in usage regards the use of biased language, detailed in the rubric. Given that the first reading assignment in all of my classes is the seven-page list of "Guidelines for Unbiased Language" from the American Psychological Association (2001), the students focus immediately on thinking about the power and privilege of language. The requirement that students self-assess at midcourse and again at the final and share the self-assessment with the instructor helps them focus on the process.

Depending on the course, students have two to five field-based, out-of-class events, interviews, and observations that require analysis, referred to as *steps to critical consciousness*, commonly known as *steps*. Students also caption a collage of related visuals for 10–20 different major topics in the course, commonly known as *clips*. For each and every step or clip, the student provides at least two meaningful course connections and the related affirmation of action or intended action. Intended actions identified earlier in the course often appear as accomplished actions in the final disposition analysis.

### Requirements Regarding Dispositions, Another Approach (Warring)

Disposition statements are a required component in the course Human Relations/Multicultural Education, Teacher Education, which is focused on multicultural education. This course is required for undergraduate and graduate students who are seeking initial licensure in teacher education and initial licensure in special education in the state. It is also required for school personnel who were licensed in other states and are currently seeking licensure in Minnesota.

As a part of the course requirements, the preservice teacher candidates give short presentations and write in-depth papers to explore their own cultural backgrounds. They also complete community-based interviews and site visits with people who differ from

themselves racially and ethnically in an attempt to better understand perspectives pertaining to school and society. All assignments use a self- and instructor-scored rubric for analysis and evaluation.

Near the end of the course, we ask candidates to reflect on their actions during the current semester and respond to disposition aspects that derive from the mission of the unit. In this case, the School of Education is "committed to develop *knowledgeable, collaborative, ethical, reflective practitioners* as transformative leaders guided by a commitment to social justice, diversity, and the promotion of democratic learning communities." When dispositions are consistent with the mission or conceptual framework of the department or school, there is a greater likelihood that support for them will be derived throughout the program.

The students are also asked to reflect on the semester and what they did in class as a result of this course in relation to the disposition rubric. This request causes the students to focus on the course and cite specific examples as they reflect on their preparation, self-study, and possible outcomes.

### Representative Disposition Comments Submitted by Undergraduate and Graduate Teacher Candidates

Across courses in varied programs, students have been able to identify their awarenesses, strategies, curricular approaches, and changes to courses regarding teaching for democracy. Excerpted from the self-analysis process, students provided evidence of the ability to identify their disposition development and resulting behaviors and actions.

#### Respect

"As a result of this class I am learning to listen to others more and make sure I understand their points before making mine."

"My additional research on Somali culture helped me to interact more successfully recently when I met with Mr. Mohamed. I was better able to respect his cultural customs after our discussion in class."

"I found using 'yes, and . . .' instead of 'yes, but . . .' an effective way to discuss sensitive topics in class and not put anyone or their ideas down."

"I felt comfortable in the classroom, which was a direct result of firm, yet flexible rules, related to mutual respect, which were set up and modeled by the professor."

"I feel I understand more about respect and have a sense of belonging, which is very important. I will work on having dispositions that provide support to the learning of my students from diverse backgrounds."

#### Critical Inquiry

"When working on questions in class I would refer to the book and the specific page and specific course material to support my opinions."

"I was shocked to see some of the current statistics and rethink my opinions based upon them. Opening my bias helped me to justify my points in class and process how to do this outside of class and in teaching which will help me 'call on others' biased opinions and statements."

"Because of this class I feel that my eyes have been opened to some situations of bias that I would never have noticed before. Over the last couple of weeks I have been involved in conversations where one of the parties has said something I feel is insensitive to the culture of another person and I was able to bring up some information I learned in this class to counter their opinions."

"Justification to me is like 'walk the talk' which I will do more effectively now and I have some new information, websites, and ideas for my classes."



## Democratic Participation

"I was able to share in either large or small group in every class session and listened attentively to the points shared by others. It was helpful to reflect upon this in my nightly journal."

"I have shared information about my students and my daughter as our group worked on better understanding identity development and gender. I was able to support my classmates for sharing even when I did not fully agree with them."

"I feel that in order to be seen as a class participant I need to talk and my feeling now is that it is far better for me to listen and learn from another person who knows what he or she is talking about than to say something meaningless just to be heard. I have become a much more active listener."

"A side note: I don't know what C. P. says he earned on this portion, but I would say he deserves a 5. I saw him a number of times taking extraordinary efforts with quieter students to . . . generate a more democratic classroom setting."

## Social Justice

"After discussing issues in this class I found myself checking my own actions and the actions of my friends and family. I learned about unconscious response and now monitor my actions more closely to be more equitable."

"I was in a retail store recently and after the clerk asked for my business phone number we found ourselves engaged in a conversation about education and the clerk said 'Yeah, I suppose if [newer immigrants are] going to be here in our country they'll need to know more.' I froze, then gently explained that this was also their new country now too and we, unless Indigenous American Indian, are all immigrants."

"I learned a great deal about gender bias and now have developed a plan of action for dealing with this in my classes and will implement it in the fall."

"I think this is the area where I need the most work. I am now aware of biased language like 'guys' and will attempt to be more gender neutral and not make assumptions about occupations and people. I am not there, yet, but am learning and committed to change."

"I have learned the importance of issues in this class and I know the difference between saying, 'I do not see color' and acknowledging that all students are different and that these differences should be celebrated."

"After our speaker on [gays, lesbians, bisexuals, and transgenders], I have begun to change my attitude, perception, and language further in regards to all aspects of life. For example, when I was extremely discouraged, instead of saying 'That's gay,' a phrase commonly used, I stopped and said, 'Oh, that's unfortunate.' This displays a positive attitude to the consequences of my own words."

"*White privilege* has become more and more aware to me. I recently did a job in which a white family was complaining that they might not be able to get an in-ground pool because their son's college tuition was expensive for the year. The next week, I did a job for an immigrant family who were worried they might not be able to afford a house payment just to get their son into college."

## Ethical Commitment

"There are several measures of improvement I can make in the above areas. I can become more familiar with the resources shared in class and I can also participate in more events or activities that raise awareness of injustices/

justices of society. Furthermore I can . . . stay abreast of current research being done in multiculturalism."

"I have been paying much closer attention to the TV programs my kids watch and am now much more aware of the stereotypes in programs and point them out and will do so in my classes. Movies and cartoons will get much closer scrutiny from me."

"Many of my students do not experience racial diversity and I am incorporating research (books, websites, museum visits) on communities of color here to assist them in broadening their perspective."

"My eyes have truly been opened to the many cultures that exist in our communities and I am more knowledgeable about my students and better able to teach them in a manner more conducive to their learning."

"I am more aware of biased language and am now re-writing my curriculum for my classes to be an example of integrated multiculturalism. Including more ethnic diversity will enable my students to see their culture represented in more than just food, heroes, and holidays."

"Now that the class is almost over, I'm trying super hard to write down things you say, look up things I'm interested in knowing more about to better my knowledge of racism and sexism, all the -isms. Just because the class is ending does not mean it ends."

## Implications

The representative comments in the previous section evidence actions as a result of reflection and emphasis on dispositions for teaching for democracy. Preservice and in-service teacher candidates have a vocabulary, a range of strategies, and, perhaps most important, meaningful awareness of what the rubric overview reminds them: "The purpose of eval-

uation is to aid in forming, strengthening, and sustaining democratic communities that are educative sites of moral discourses and actions" (Beyer & Pagano, 1994, p. 381).

Dinkelman (2003) discusses reflection and self-study as powerful tools for use in the preparation of teachers. In this process of reflection, it is essential to determine which techniques work best and why we as teacher educators should strive to create the ability to reflect on unit or department dispositions. The context becomes a significant point for analysis in this process. When we understand this need, the context, and the process for accomplishing it, we will be better equipped to train teachers to develop the ability to meet the stated dispositions.

The use of the mission or conceptual framework as a guiding principle indicates an agreement and a focus on the collective preparation of teacher candidates in the program. With collective emphasis, there is a greater likelihood that programmatic outcomes will be met. The use of a critical-theory perspective is important, and it assists in the realization that "given the interrelationships of educational and social theories and practices, it is clear that no substantive changes will take place through exclusively individual initiatives and isolated events" (Beyer & Liston, 1996, p. 154). The interconnected events lead to courses of action and support or assist in the identification of dispositions. "We are *objects* of social institutions and processes while we *intentionally* engage in meaningful behavior" (Cherryholmes, 1988, p. 35); therefore, the unit of analysis is interactive and shifting between the individual and the organization. The mission of an institution or unit should be used to develop the crucial dispositions to be assessed in the respective programs facilitating this important interaction.

The processes of selecting curriculum and teaching strategies should include, at the very least, considerations of how desirable dispositions can be strengthened and how undesirable dispositions can be weakened (Katz, 1993). Both the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (1992) and

the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (1999) rely on reflection as one of the components that teachers need in order to evaluate and scrutinize their practice and improve their teaching. Therefore, reflection on dispositions that are embedded within the curriculum and teaching strategies should demonstrate an understanding of desired outcomes and facilitate the development of these dispositions. Reflection must be purposeful, culturally conscious, and critical.

The process demands what we have identified as *culturally conscious critical reflection*, which

involves questioning that which is otherwise taken for granted and involves looking for unarticulated assumptions and seeing from new perspectives. With these new perspectives comes the empowerment to understand our identities and actions with the context of complex global issues. The new perspectives assist in the development of global understandings and relevant and necessary applications in the teaching-learning process. (Huber & Warring, 2004, n.p.)

Culturally conscious critical reflection facilitates an understanding of the process necessary for teachers to understand and engage students so that both parties are better able to develop the significant elements of the desired dispositions. This new understanding applies to social justice and all facets of learning inside and outside of the classroom. Examples from student comments support this contention.

When we learn to act, think, and respond differently because of new realities gained through culturally responsive, critically constructive reflection, we are all more engaged and connected with our students as they connect with us. We work in concert for social justice. Metaphorically speaking, we become the authors of our own lives when we take the responsibility for our own beliefs, identity, relationships, and worldview (Magolda, 2004). Whether we write a life story of social justice and whether our students gain the skills, dis-

positions, and worldviews to write their own social justice stories may depend on whether we can assist them in developing and utilizing culturally conscious critical reflection on dispositions and resulting actions. At the beginning of the courses, many students were unaware of their own lack of support for opinions and their own communication styles. After discussion and self-reflection, understanding and self-monitoring occurred. As noted by the representative comments, a focus on specific dispositions did in fact create a richer understanding of democratic learning communities, understanding, and positive change for social justice. ATE

## Appendix: A Rubric for Disposition Analysis—Global Programs

Paulo Freire admonishes and challenges us to become critically reflective and conscious of our interactions and their contributions to the liberation (Shor, 1987) or oppression of others. Freire (1970/1986) reminds us in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* that “*conscientização* is the deepening of the attitude of awareness characteristic of all emergence” and that “all authentic education investigates thinking” (p. 101). His lifelong work challenges us to become fully conscious of our situations and then intervene and come forward—emerge as transformative leaders—an emergence that is necessarily constant, ongoing, lifelong. Disposition evaluation and self-evaluation are based on commitment to developing knowledgeable, collaborative, ethical, reflective practitioners as transformative leaders guided by a commitment to social justice, diversity, and the promotion of democratic learning communities. Entries should include awarenesses, affirmations, and, most important, actions. “The purpose of evaluation is to aid in forming, strengthening, and sustaining democratic communities that are educative sites of moral discourses and actions” (Beyer & Pagano, 1994, p. 383).

<b>Criterion/score</b>	
<b>Respect</b>	Recognizes and respects multiple perspectives and consistently displays a positive professional attitude toward peers and university/school faculty, assignments and activities, and children and adolescents and their families in verbal and nonverbal communication
5 points	Communicates with a respectful, problem-solving attitude, asking for clarification and checking understanding of the other position before stating and providing justification for an alternative position. Actively resists oppressive practices and institutions, including privilege at the expense of others. Seeks, implements, and appreciates multiple perspectives
3 points	When communicating disagreement/disapproval of others' statements, states an alternative position, and provides justification for that position. Shows awareness of individual and institutional oppression of others. Implements and appreciates multiple perspectives
1 point	Communicates disagreement/disapproval of others and/or their statements without considering institutional oppressions and/or multiple perspectives
0 points	Communicates disagreement/disapproval of others and/or their statements rudely and/or disrespectfully and/or relies on a position of privilege (e.g., race, gender, class, education) to do so
<b>Critical inquiry</b>	Justifies and supports statements through knowledgeable, reflective inquiry
5 points	Synthesizes professional knowledge bases, established theories, research literature, site/clinical/field-based observations, and/or course/program content to support interpretations and conclusions rather than stating opinions/judgments
3 points	Bases opinions and/or judgments on professional knowledge bases, established theories, research literature, site/clinical/field-based observations, and specific course/program content
1 point	Provides limited justification or support, relying on personal opinions and/or judgments
0 points	States personal opinion or makes judgments without justification or support
<b>Democratic participation</b>	Participates in activities and discussions as a democratic, transformative leader
5 points	Arrives on time to class, attentive, engaged, and prepared, and consistently contributes in ways that support group members and extend the group's work as a transformative leader
3 points	Arrives on time to class, attentive and prepared, often makes verbal and/or nonverbal contributions related to activity/discussion
1 point	Seldom makes contributions related to activity/discussion or is not present for all classes/activities
0 points	Seldom/never participates in class discussion or activities; inattentive, disengaged, or unprepared
<b>Social justice</b>	Promotes global social justice and liberatory, democratic learning communities

5 points	Employs unbiased language, actively promotes respectful human relations, and engages in actions promoting liberatory, democratic learning communities
3 points	Employs unbiased language, supports tolerance of diversity, and engages in actions promoting democratic learning communities
1 point	Employs unbiased language, or supports tolerance of diversity, or engages in actions promoting democratic learning communities
0 points	Employs biased language and/or disrespects aspects of human relations, race, and diversity
<b>Ethical commitment</b>	Values the learning process, the information garnered in the process, and the transformative nature of the process
5 points	Demonstrates an eagerness about the learning content and process through active engagement in critical reflection, inquiry, and culturally responsible pedagogy
3 points	Makes statements that reflect a sense of value in the learning content and process and active engagement in critical reflection, inquiry, and culturally responsible pedagogy
1 point	Shows neither a positive nor negative attitude toward information presented in course work and for the learning process
0 points	Expresses disdain for information presented for courses and/or learning processes

Proficiency: Score of 3 or higher in each area

Midterm disposition evaluation—self:

\_\_\_/5 \_\_\_/5 \_\_\_/5 \_\_\_/5 \_\_\_/5 = \_\_\_/25

Instructor:

\_\_\_/5 \_\_\_/5 \_\_\_/5 \_\_\_/5 \_\_\_/5 = \_\_\_/25

Final disposition evaluation—self:

\_\_\_/5 \_\_\_/5 \_\_\_/5 \_\_\_/5 \_\_\_/5 = \_\_\_/25

Instructor:

\_\_\_/5 \_\_\_/5 \_\_\_/5 \_\_\_/5 \_\_\_/5 = \_\_\_/25

Total

\_\_\_/100

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